Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Screwtape Letter 29 **(TWISTED VIRTUES)**

Screwtape has learned that the Germans are certain to bomb the patient’s community and that he will likely die in the raid. He tells Wormwood that he must quickly (maybe even desperately or clumsily) produce a sin in the patient’s mind so that he will surely die in a state that will incline him more towards Hell than Heaven. He suggests that the sin could be cowardice, or courage followed by pride, or racist hatred of Germany. He warns that it is better to avoid pride because this would involve filling the patient with courage first…..and that COWARDICE is a very powerful tool for devils (Also, hatred is very easy for devils to produce in humans…this one is almost a no-brainer). As we reach the end of the book, Screwtape becomes increasingly apprehensive and he reminds Wormwood to fill the patient with multiple and competing ideas to confuse him.

Interestingly, Screwtape ends by observing that fear itself isn’t a sin. Here, more than anywhere else in the novel, Screwtape speaks with CS Lewis’ “voice” in reminding us that it is OK to be afraid….we can still have courage even when we are afraid. The divine strategy to combat hatred and cowardice is VIRUTE AND THE VALUE OF MORALITY. Just look at Jesus on the cross for example!!

Discussion Questions about letter 29 in the book……

1. What does it mean to be courageous? Can you have fear and still be courageous? What do you think is holding most teens back from living courageous lives?
2. Screwtape says, “Hatred is best combined with Fear” and “Hatred has it’s pleasures.” How does Screwtape link hatred to fear?
3. Have you ever made a choice that now seems more cowardly than courageous? What was the result? Did you grow spiritually or experience guilt? Would you do things differently if you had the opportunity to make the choice again? (This one is private…you don’t have to share this!)

What Jesus says about courage in the bible (Matthew 16:25) …… *For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.*